GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:844
ANSWERED ON:06.12.2004
RECYCLING OF HAZARDOUS TOXIC WASTE
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Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether India is importing hazardous toxic waste causing serious health problem to a large number of people in the country;

(b) if so, whether recycling of this waste is a biggest threat to global environment and process of recycling also generates lot of toxic materials which pollute environment and place workers at risk;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether according to Green Peace India, the export and import of toxic waste to Third World countries, is an unacceptable transfer of responsibilities to those least able to afford it; and

(e) if so, the facts thereof and the steps taken/proposed to be taken in this regard?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA)

(a) to (e) The import of hazardous wastes is strictly regulated by the Government through the Hazardous Wastes (Management & Handling) Rules, 1989 (HW Rules) as amended from time to time. Under the provisions of the HW Rules, import of hazardous wastes for dumping or disposal is prohibited. 29 categories of highly hazardous wastes are totally prohibited for import and export purpose. Some identified hazardous wastes specified under List A and List B of Schedule 3 of the HW Rules, can be imported for recycling/reuse purpose under strictly regulated conditions. Used oil and 22 categories of non ferrous metal wastes, specified under Schedule 4 of the HW Rules, can be imported by actual users registered with the Central Pollution Control Board as having environmentally sound management facilities for reprocessing such wastes.

The Basel Convention on the Control of Trans-boundary Movement of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal, ratified by 162 countries including India, provides that export of hazardous wastes takes place only with the consent of the importing country and that too for recycling/reprocessing purpose. Major provisions of the Basel Convention have been incorporated in the HW Rules.